

Serial No. 09/501,168

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 10, 11, 14, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,587,680 issued to Ala-Laurila et al. on July 1, 2003. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Ala-Laurila et al. fails to teach the limitation recited in applicants' independent claim 1 of "receiving a response to said request at said wireless terminal, when said second base station knows said first base station prior to receiving said request, said response indicating that said second base station can engage in expedited handoffs with said first base station". This is because every AP in the network of Ala-Laurila et al. always "knows" every other AP in the network to which it can make a handoff, and so each AP can always exchange security information with the other AP involved in a handoff. Thus, there can never be a situation in the network of Ala-Laurila et al. in which the second base station cannot engage in an expedited handoff with the first base station. (See Ala-Laurila et al., column 5, line 43-59 and column 11, line 24 through column 12, line 16.) As a result, there is no need for the message recited in applicants' claim 10. Note that if such a message did exist in Ala-Laurila, which it does not, there would never be a handoff during which it would not be sent. As a result, such a message would consume bandwidth but provide no information. Seemingly because of this Ala-Laurila et al. does not include such a message. For the same reason, one of ordinary skill in the art would not modify Ala-Laurila et al. to include such a message.

By contrast, applicants' invention requires such a message because there are situations when a handoff will be possible, but not an expedited handoff.

Note that the section cited in the Office Action as purporting to show this element, i.e., column 10, lines 44-49, appears to relate to inter-base-station communication, and not to any message received at the wireless terminal.

Since Ala-Laurila et al. does not teach all the elements of applicants' claim 10, applicants' claim 10 is allowable over Ala-Laurila et al. under 35 U.S.C. 102. So too claims 11, 14, and 15, which depend from claim 10 and include all the limitations thereof, are allowable over claim 10.

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Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ala-Laurila et al. in view of United States Patent No. 6,434,134 issued to La Porta et al. on August 12, 2002. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ala-Laurila et al. in view of United States Patent No. 5,598,459 issued to Haartsen on January 28, 1997. These grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed for the following reason.

Given that independent claim 10 from which each of these dependent claims respectively depends is allowable over Ala-Laurila et al. for the reasons cited hereinabove, and neither supplementary reference supplies the element that would enable a proper rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 of independent claim 10, because it does not supply at least the element indicated hereinabove to be lacking in Ala-Laurila et al., dependent claims 12 and 13 are allowable over the proposed combination under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action's rejections have been overcome and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited.

If, however, the Examiner still believes that there are unresolved issues, he is invited to call applicant's attorney so that arrangements may be made to discuss and resolve any such issues.

In the event that an extension of time is required for this amendment to be considered timely, and a petition therefor does not otherwise accompany this amendment, any necessary extension of time is hereby petitioned for, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the appropriate cost of such petition to the Lucent Technologies Deposit Account No. 12-2325.

Respectfully,

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Date: 5/17/07

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